

# THE CLAIMS

It is claimed:

1 1. A method of testing the hearing of a user utilizing a computer system, the  
2 computer system including a computer and a speaker, the computer including a first  
3 audio source and a second audio source, the computer operable to output an electrical  
4 signal to the speaker from the first audio source and from the second audio source, the  
5 speaker operable to convert the electrical signal into a stimulus, the method  
6 comprising:

- 7 a) downloading a computer program from a server to the computer;
- 8 b) executing the computer program on the computer, the execution of the  
9 computer program muting the first audio source;
- 10 c) generating a stimulus; and
- 11 d) receiving an input from the user that indicates whether the user heard the  
12 stimulus.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of downloading the computer program  
2 includes transferring the computer program from the server to the computer via the  
3 Internet.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of downloading the computer program  
2 includes transferring the computer program from the server to the computer via an  
3 email.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a volume control.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box and by  
3 setting the value of a volume control.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of executing the computer program includes muting a microphone audio input.

8. The method of claim 1, further including:

- a) sending first data to the server;
- b) qualifying the hearing of the user; and
- c) sending second data to the computer.

9. A method of testing the hearing of a user utilizing a computer system, the computer system including a computer and a speaker, the computer including a first audio source and a second audio source, the computer operable to output an electrical signal to the speaker from the first audio source and from the second audio source, the speaker operable to convert the electrical signal into a stimulus, the method comprising:

- a) downloading a computer program from a server to the computer;
- b) executing the computer program on the computer, the execution of the computer program storing a value that indicates whether the first audio source was muted and if the stored value indicates that the first audio source was not muted, then muting the first audio source;
- c) generating a stimulus;
- d) receiving an input from the user that indicates whether the user heard the stimulus; and
- e) if the stored value indicates that the first audio source was not muted, then un-muting the first audio source.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the act of downloading the computer program includes transferring the computer program from the server to the computer via the Internet.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the act of downloading the computer program includes transferring the computer program from the server to the computer via an email.

1 12. The method of claim 9, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box.

1 13. The method of claim 9, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a volume control.

1 14. The method of claim 9, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box and by  
3 setting the value of a volume control.

1 15. The method of claim 9, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes muting a microphone audio input.

1 16. The method of claim 9, further including:

- 2 a) sending first data to the server;
- 3 b) qualifying the hearing of the user; and
- 4 c) sending second data to the computer.

1 17. A program storage device that contains computer readable instructions that,  
2 when executed by a computer system, tests the hearing of a user by:

- 3 a) muting an audio source;
- 4 b) generating a stimulus; and
- 5 c) receiving an input from the user that indicates whether the user heard the
- 6 stimulus.

1 18. The program storage device of claim 17, wherein the act of muting the first  
2 audio source includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check  
3 box.

1 19. The program storage device of claim 17, wherein the act of muting the first  
2 audio source includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a volume  
3 control.

20. The program storage device of claim 17, wherein the act of muting the first audio source includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box and by setting the value of a volume control.

21. The program storage device of claim 17, wherein the act of muting the first audio source includes muting a microphone audio input.

22. A program storage device that contains computer readable instructions that, when executed by a computer system, tests the hearing of a user by:

- a) storing a value that indicates whether a first audio source was muted;
- b) if the first audio source was not muted, then muting the first audio source;
- c) generating a stimulus;
- d) receiving an input from the user that indicates whether the user heard the stimulus; and if the stored value indicates that the first audio source was not muted, then un-muting the first audio source.

23. The program storage device of claim 22, wherein the act of muting the first audio source includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box.

24. The program storage device of claim 22, wherein the act of muting the first audio source includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a volume control.

25. The program storage device of claim 22, wherein the act of muting the first audio source includes muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box and by setting the value of a volume control.

26. The program storage device of claim 22, wherein the act of muting the first audio source includes muting a microphone audio input.

27. A method of testing the hearing of a user utilizing a computer system, the computer system including a computer and a speaker, the computer including a first audio source and a second audio source, the computer operable to output an electrical

4 signal to the speaker from the first audio source and from the second audio source, the  
5 speaker operable to convert the electrical signal into a stimulus, the method  
6 comprising:

- 7 a) downloading a computer program from a server to the computer;
- 8 b) executing the computer program on the computer, the execution of the  
9 computer program un-muting the first audio source;
- 10 c) generating a stimulus; and
- 11 d) receiving an input from the user that indicates whether the user heard the  
12 stimulus.

1 28. The method of claim 27, wherein the act of downloading the computer  
2 program includes transferring the computer program from the server to the computer  
3 via the Internet.

1 29. The method of claim 27, wherein the act of downloading the computer  
2 program includes transferring the computer program from the server to the computer  
3 via an email.

1 30. The method of claim 27, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes un-muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box.

1 31. The method of claim 27, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes un-muting the first audio source by setting the value of a volume control.

1 32. The method of claim 27, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes un-muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box and by  
3 setting the value of a volume control.

1 33. The method of claim 27, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes un-muting a MIDI input.

1 34. The method of claim 27, wherein the act of executing the computer program  
2 includes un-muting a WAVE input.

35. The method of claim 27, further including:

- a) sending first data to the server;
- b) qualifying the hearing of the user; and
- c) sending second data to the computer.

36. A program storage device that contains computer readable instructions that, when executed by a computer system, tests the hearing of a user by:

- a) un-muting an audio source;
- b) generating a stimulus; and
- c) receiving an input from the user that indicates whether the user heard the stimulus.

37. The program storage device of claim 36, wherein the act of un-muting the first audio source includes un-muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box.

38. The program storage device of claim 36, wherein the act of un-muting the first audio source includes un-muting the first audio source by setting the value of a volume control.

39. The program storage device of claim 36, wherein the act of un-muting the first audio source includes un-muting the first audio source by setting the value of a check box and by setting the value of a volume control.

40. The program storage device of claim 36, wherein the act of un-muting the first audio source includes un-muting a WAVE input.

41. The program storage device of claim 36, wherein the act of un-muting the first audio source includes un-muting a MIDI input.